



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

THE SO-CALLED PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT:  
ITS REAL NATURE, CAUSES AND SIGNIFICANCE

---

BY CHARLES M. HOLLINGSWORTH,  
Author of "From Freedom to Despotism," Washington, D. C.

---

What constitutes a political change, a progressive change or movement?

From the time of the framing and adoption of our federal constitution, American statesmen and publicists have constantly extolled the merits of the system which that constitution provides as marking perhaps the greatest step in political progress in the whole course of the world's history. It has even been the common American belief and boast that the constitution provided a system of government of and by all the people, adapted for use on the largest national scale, so nearly perfect, so effectively providing against every source of the weakness and instability that had led to, the downfall of constitutional governments in the past, that in its essential features it was not only fitted to endure indefinitely, but would answer the needs of all mankind for all time. That is to say, it has virtually been regarded as constituting the highest, most advanced stage that is possible in political progress.

It was in recognition of this phase of American opinion that James Bryce, in his "American Commonwealth," first published in 1888, said that "In the United States the discussion of political problems busies itself with details, and assumes that the main lines must remain as they are forever."

These high claims have been based primarily on the fact that the system established was more thoroughly democratic than any that had before existed, on a national scale as regards equality of rights and absence of political class-privilege, and was thus one of broadly popular consent and not of force; and secondarily and more especially on the fact that the constitution provided a highly perfected system of ascertaining and carrying out the will of all the people of all classes and sections by a comprehensive application of the principle of representation. And although the unqualified claims that have thus been made regarding the durability and

universal applicability of our constitutional system are no doubt ill-founded, the indisputable fact remains that the main features of that system mark the most essential differences between modern and ancient constitutional government. In this historical sense, therefore, its establishment, if only for a period, could properly be called a great step in the world's political progress.

Now, what is the nature and trend of the so-called "progressive" movement, regarded either from the point of view of a new and more perfecting advance on the constitutional systems of former ages, or of a more democratic and truly representative system than this country has so far had under its present constitution?

According to the formal professions of the promoters of the movement, it is one which provides for and secures a much more effective popular diffusion of political power than before existed. Its object is to "restore government to the people," or, as it is said, "to establish real popular government," the assumption being that anything which tends to more thoroughgoing popularity and increased directness in the workings of government is necessarily progressive.

But when the various measures or policies of this movement are impartially examined, it will be found:

(1) That the movement is not progressive, in the general historical sense, but the reverse;

(2) That it is not in the true and broad sense democratic in its basis and objects, nor constitutional in its spirit, but is distinctively a class movement, aiming at arbitrary control of other classes;

(3) That its program of reforms does not provide for the active exercise of any real governmental power or functions by the electorate as a body, or by a majority of the electorate as a body, but only provides different and more direct means of delegating such functions to individuals:

(4) That in actual operation these reforms delegate greater power to single individuals than are delegated to any class of elected officials under the hitherto prevalent representation system.

1. *In the Historical Sense, the Movement is not Progressive but Retrogressive*

The "progressive" reforms do not undertake to perfect the representative system, which marks the greatest advance of modern over ancient constitutional government. In part they repudiate

that system, and in part they pervert it to an exclusive class use and end, and render its action irregular and capricious even as thus used.

In so far as they repudiate or discredit the representative system, the propagandists of the new reforms are simply going back, as far as modern conditions and the size of modern states will permit, to that more direct mode of declaring their preferences or decisions, on the part of the mass of the voters, which characterized popular government in previous ages of the world. If this is progress, it is progress in quite a different sense of the word from that which it bears when applied to other phases of civilization. In the sciences, and in all the practical arts, there is no thought of going back to the conditions, methods or systems of ancient times, and calling that progress.

The fact is, however, that the word progress, when used to characterize any political movement of reform or revolution with respect to the lodgment of political power, is a largely misapplied and much abused term. As above stated, American statesmen and publicists have commonly regarded the establishment of our constitutional system of government as marking a new era in the world's political progress, in the sense of a permanent advance from arbitrary to free government, due to advancing political knowledge and experience. A vast deal of confusing misapprehension may be got rid of by discarding this idea entirely, for which in the long run there is no historical warrant, and regarding every change either to a more popular or a more restricted government, in any nation, not as signaling the arrival of a new epoch either of progress or decline in the world's political history, but only as a consequence of the arrival of that particular nation at a new stage in its own life-history. This view finds two-fold confirmation, (1) in the fact that extremes of both restricted and popular government have co-existed in every epoch of the world's history; and (2) in the fact that nations in widely-separated epochs have repeated essentially the same round of reformatory and revolutionary changes.

As will immediately appear the "Progressive" movement is inaugurating what was the last modification of the ancient popular systems of government before their final downfall and disappearance.

## 2. *The "Progressive" Movement not Truly Democratic in its Basis and Objects*

Forms, policies and operations of government have a broadly and strictly democratic basis and character only so long as they are directed to the enactment and execution of laws that apply to all classes, and as near as may be to all sections of the country, alike, which are promotive of the common or reciprocal interests of all necessary component elements of society or the nation. It was in this broadly democratic spirit, and for the attainment of this end of the prosperity and well-being for all, that the founders of our system of government wrought in framing the constitution. As the preamble says:

"We the people of the United States (not meaning the "plain people," the "common people," or those without much or any accumulated wealth, but the whole of the country's citizen population) in order to provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare," etc., "do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

But the "Progressive" movement is not in the interest of the whole people in the all-inclusive sense in which the term people was employed by the constitution's makers. It is avowedly in the interest of the "plain people," the "common people," the "masses," who have comparatively little wealth, or none, and against those who own or control large accumulations of wealth and their political representatives. It is a class movement as distinguished from a broadly democratic movement; and it aims to gain complete control of government in the interest of a numerous, not wealthy, class which it terms the "people," to the entire exclusion of any determining or controlling voice on the part of the smaller class who are identified with the large economic interests of the country.

It does not alter this fact to say that the movement is directed against an alleged perversion of the representative system to a class government of the opposite kind, controlled by, and for the benefit of, the large economic interests. Even on that contention, it is only a substitution for one kind of class government of another kind, in some respects less efficient and less stable, and really less democratic. I say less democratic, for, as will presently be shown, it seeks to accomplish its ends, in any state or in the nation, by

having the "people" vote plenary, largely arbitrary, powers into the hands of single individuals.

These willing individuals, the real originators and promoters of the movement, take care to declare that they are not bosses or dictators but only leaders of the "people." But that is precisely the literal meaning of the word demagogue, compounded of two Greek words meaning "the common people" and "to lead." And if there is deserved odium attached to this term it is due to the character and conduct of those who have assumed the office. It is significant that the most prominent aspirants to that office to-day should choose for themselves a title which became one of so much ill-repute in the declining days of the Greek democracies and the Roman Republic. In this phase of the movement there is nothing really progressive, but only a repetition of ancient political history. In fact, Aristotle describes with great accuracy, from ancient examples, except for the absence of the representative feature, both the basis and character of the truly democratic constitution which was originally established in this country, and the kind of government which the "Progressives" are now undertaking to substitute for it. In describing true democracy he points out that in all its modifications "the law is supreme." And he then describes another form of popular government, the workings of which are only partially regulated by law; and the essentials of the description, although drawn from systems of the Hellenic world of more than two thousand years ago, read as if they might have been written in this present year of 1912 A.D. of what is now being advocated and put into effect in this country; even including the subjection of the judiciary to popular control.

There is yet another species (of democracy) which is similar to the last except that the people (the "commons," or common people) rather than the law is here supreme. This is the case when it is popular decrees which are the supreme or final authorities, and not the law. It is the demagogues who are to blame for this state of things. For in states which enjoy a democratical polity regulated by law no demagogues ever make their appearance. . . . But it is where the laws are not supreme that demagogues appear. For the commons in such a state are converted into a monarch, . . . as being exempted from the control of the laws; they become despotic and consequently pay high honors to sycophants, and in fact a democracy of this description is analogous to tyranny among monarchical forms of government. . . . It is the demagogues who are responsible for the supremacy of the popular decrees rather than the laws, as they always refer everything to the commons. And they do

so because the consequence is an increase of their own power, if the commons control all affairs, and they themselves control the commons as it is their guidance that the commons always follow.

Another circumstance which leads to the last form of democracy is that all who have any complaint against the officers of state argue that the judicial power ought to be vested in the commons; and as the commons gladly entertain the indictment, the result is that the authority of all the officers of state is seriously impaired.

By way of conclusion, Aristotle has this to say regarding the false pretenses and real character of this kind of government:

It would seem a just criticism to assert that this kind of democracy is not a constitutional government at all, as constitutional government is impossible without the supremacy of laws. For it is right that the law should be supreme universally and the officers of state only in particular cases, if the government is to be regarded as constitutional. And as democracy is, as we have seen, a form of polity, it is evident that the constitution, in which all business is administered by popular decrees, is not even a democracy in the strict sense of the term, as it is impossible that any popular decree should be capable of universal application.<sup>1</sup>

It will be noted that what Aristotle refers to as popular decrees he shows to be in reality decrees of the demagogues, "as it is their guidance [in voting] that the commons always follow."

### 3. *The Progressive Reforms only Provide More Direct Modes of Delegating Governing Authority and Functions to Individuals*

Where all the "progressive" measures—the direct primary, the initiative, the referendum and the recall—are put in operation, no new power, no new mode of exercising political power or functions, is thereby conferred upon the electorate. Under our republican system as it has hitherto been maintained, the one means which the electorate have of exercising political power is by voting; and with all of these reform measures adopted that would still remain their only means of doing so.

The initiative only provides that a law framed by some individual may, by a vote of a certain percentage of the electorate, in the form of a petition, be brought before the whole electorate, and its adoption or rejection decided by a general vote. A vote of yes or no on the proposition presented is the whole extent of the powers of the "people" in both steps of this process.

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *The Politics* Book VI, Chap. IV, Weldon's Translations.

The referendum is only a means of accepting or repudiating by popular vote the action of a representative legislative body in framing and enacting laws, and gives the electorate no part in the framing of laws, which is really the creative, constructive work of legislation.

The recall only provides for the voting, at one and the same time, of executive or judicial powers out of the hands of one individual and into the hands of another.

Thus the entire modifying effect of these reforms is to increase the frequency of voting and the number of things voted upon by the electorate; while leaving the framing of the laws and the exercising of both the executive and the judicial functions of government in the hands of individuals.

In fact, the act of voting is in its very nature a delegation of power. It is employed either in choosing a delegate to represent, or act for, the voter in an executive, legislative, judicial or other official capacity, or as a mode of accepting and ratifying, or rejecting, legislative work that has been done for the voter by either an elected body of delegates or by volunteer representatives.

In the matter of framing laws, constitutional or statute, what the initiative really does is to transfer that function from official lawmakers to non-official lawmakers. But every such non-official lawmaker, being self-appointed and extra-constitutional, occupies an irresponsible position very similar to that of the party machine boss who holds no public office. The initiative simply brings into the field a people's boss or champion to pit himself against the machine boss, in the control of legislation. Or, like the machine boss, he may while functioning as a public official exercise unofficially his powers as a people's boss.

The view here expressed finds corroboration in the statements of "Progressive" propagandists themselves, both regarding the nature and purpose of the advocated reforms, and, as will presently appear, regarding the manner in which they have thus far been realized.

Senator Bourne, of Oregon, made a speech in the United States Senate on May 5, 1910, on "Popular versus Delegated Government," in which he described at length the Oregon reformed system, ending with the declaration that it "insures absolute government by the people." The first sentence of that speech runs thus:

"The justice of all laws rests primarily on the integrity, ability,

and disinterestedness of the individuals enacting them, those construing them, and those administering them."

Is a system in which individuals enact laws, individuals construe them, and individuals administer them, an "absolute government by the people," as distinguished from delegated government? What power is it that individuals exercise in the performance of these several functions, under any elective system, if it is not delegated power, actual or implied?

"Fortunate, indeed," says Senator Bourne, "is that party which possesses in its electorate one or more individuals who are able to advance new ideas or evolve solutions which appeal to the sound judgment of his fellowmen." And again, "The initiative develops the electorate because it encourages study of principles and policies of government, and affords the originator of new ideas in government an opportunity to secure popular judgment upon his measures if eight per cent of the voters of his state deem the same worthy of submission to popular vote." That is to say, the initiative is in reality exercised not by the people, but by an individual, the non-official "originator of a new idea in government," and so on to the end of this famous speech.

#### 4. *The Movement Really a First Step in the Extreme Concentration of Political Power*

Notwithstanding all the claims that are made for the "progressive" reforms in the name and on behalf of the "people," as one which restores them to power, it is in its actual working out really the first step of a revolution to the most narrowly restricted of all forms of government, namely, the arbitrary personal rule of a single individual. On this point decisive evidence may readily be cited from the promoters of the movement themselves.

While Senator Bourne has been almost the sole propagandist in the eastern sections of the country of Oregon's system of "progressive" reforms, it is Mr. W. S. U'Ren, of that state, who is known in that section as the father and chief apostle of the system.

In an interview published in the *New York Herald* of September 10, 1911, Mr. U'Ren told how, as the result of a ten-years' campaign of agitation and "educating up to it," "we got the question of amending the constitution to include the initiative and referendum submitted to the people, and the people of Oregon voted

for it." And "just as soon as we got the initiative and referendum through we organized the 'People's Power League' to back up measures we wanted the people to vote on."

"Do the people of Oregon always vote the way you want them to?" I asked.

"They always have thus far," replied U'Ren modestly.

"I began to understand, then," says the interviewer, "what the *Portland Oregonian* meant when it remarked editorially that 'Oregon has two legislatures, one at Salem and one under Mr. U'Ren's hat.'"

Now, this may be in its way government for the "people," as all government is to a certain extent; but it is certainly putting a severe strain on the meaning of terms to call it, pre-eminently, government of the people or by the people, or to apply to it the descriptive phrase, "restoring government to the people." So far as it is put into effect it is personal, one-man government.

The history of the "progressive" movement in California affords even a more striking illustration of this fact. Thus a popular account of it has been given, not entitled "What the People of California Have Done," but under the title—"Johnson: A Governor Who Has Made Good."

The opposers of the old party machines first got a primary law, and then sought for and found in Hiram W. Johnson an individual, not merely to lead, but to gain and exercise controlling power in the state. The governorship election was to take place in November, the nominating primary in August. Mr. Johnson started on an electioneering campaign in his automobile, in March, and kept it up continuously for the five months preceding the nominating primary. He went into every part of the state; and wherever he went he told the people and the politicians:

"I am going to be the next governor of California, and when I am governor I shall kick William F. Herrin and the Southern Pacific Railroad out of politics and out of the government of this state." And on that declaration, in the first person singular, it is said "he swept everything before him." Moreover, "he carried with him a legislature friendly in both branches."

Two of the sub-headings of the article are: "What Johnson Accomplished in One Legislative Session;" and "Johnson's Success in Handling the Legislature."

While this was perhaps all well and good, where do the people come in, except in the voting by which they delegated a concentrated and all but supreme power to one man? The pretense that in being prevailed upon to vote such power into his hands, they became themselves lawmakers, and took into their own hands the administration of the state government, is, on the face of it, the variest moonshine and humbug.

The history of the progressive movement in Wisconsin, as given by its own friends, affords no less positive evidence that the movement is one of increased concentration of political power in individual hands, rather than of a wider diffusion of power among the people or electorate. Thus Mr. La Follette, who makes very good claim to having been the pioneer progressive, makes his own personal biography cover essentially the whole of the movement in that state. He scarcely finds occasion to mention the people at all, except as, by superior electioneering methods, he secured their votes. But his narrative bristles with I's, as he tells how I fought one machine boss or another for fifteen or twenty years, and how I defeated or was beaten by the party organizations in various nominating conventions and elections.

One of Mr. La Follette's magazine biographers, referring to a speech he made in 1897, in his first advocacy of the direct primary method of making nominations, says, "It was the bugle call for the first battle . . . of the war for the resumption by the people of the powers of government." And then, telling of his second election to the governorship, the writer says, "This time he smote the enemy hip and thigh. The legislature was his, and the statute books were his to write in what he would." In this, have we really a resumption by the people of the powers of government, or an assumption by or delegation to one man of the office and powers of a dictator?

It is not here a question of whether or not the work Mr. La Follette did as governor was beneficial; but the question of whether it was accomplished through a diffusion or a concentration of governmental power and authority.

Neither does the fact that he was elected to the position affect the character of the government thus instituted as one of essentially personal rule, with the supreme power concentrated in the hands

of one man. Both the Napoleons were elected to their positions of supreme imperial power.

As is clearly evidenced by these instances, what the "progressive" reform movement really does is to provide ways and means by which a majority of the electorate may commission one man, who promises them betterment of their condition, with plenary, unrestricted powers to undertake to carry out the promise, generally by voting him into a leading executive position; and this with the implied understanding that he is personally to direct and control the legislative, and at need the judicial functions, as well as exercise the executive functions of government, in achieving the desired end.

That these reforms should work out in this manner is a natural and necessary consequence of the character and situation of that numerous part of the electorate in whose behalf they are advocated, electors who are not in position and have not the fit capacity and experience to act effectively through indirect representative methods, in opposition to the economically organized special interests. Not being competent judges of what can and what cannot be accomplished by political agencies and action, in the way of a desired equalizing of economic conditions or status, they vote the matter into the hands of some one who claims he knows how to do it, and puts himself forward as their professed champion and leader. Just as with the demagogues of old so with the demagogues of to-day—"it is their guidance that the commons always follow."

I have likened the people's champion to the machine boss, in certain respects. But there is an important difference, and one on which Mr. La Follette lays great stress. He has no machine; he does not work in secret and carry on secret political bargaining. No, because it would be impossible to work that way with the part of the electorate in which he gets mainly his support, the economically unorganized, largely dispersed, part of the population. It is necessary to make his appeal direct and personal to every man, as far as that is possible. He must make himself solid, not secretly with the few who have much wealth, but openly with the many of moderate, little or no wealth. And when things come to that pass, it is the getting the direct support of the many that puts the "man on horseback" in his position of absolute power. It is not the head of an oligarchy of alleged special privilege, but the people's

avowed deliverer from such an oligarchy, who, when opportunity is ripe, is most ready and apt to put aside all legal restraints and exercise arbitrary personal rule.

Julius Cæsar was an eminent politician-statesman who had no machine. From his earliest career, he was ever ready with his fiery oratory to champion the cause of the Roman democracy; and, although a senator himself, he was in frequent conflict with the senatorial oligarchy. This road, for him, led to personal imperial autocracy. If we desire a short cut to the same end, I know of no better way than to push forward and extend these pseudo-democratic reforms until they have been adopted throughout our entire system.

As I have said, the movement is a first step toward the establishment of personal absolutism. It is to be considered as a first step only because the commission given the individual is only for a limited period of time. The second and fully-consummating step will be taken when the commission is made perpetual.

#### 5. *American Democracy's New Dilemma*

Naturally and necessarily some considerable period of time must intervene between the inauguration of the first step and the consummation of the last step in this revolution from true democracy to personal autocracy. And there is the clearest indication, as well as theoretical ground for prediction, that this interval will be marked by great instability and inefficiency of government. In this respect, as in others, there will simply be a repetition of what happened at a similar stage in their histories in the ancient declining democracies and republics. As we have seen, Aristotle noted as one important result of the substitution for government by law, of government by popular decrees procured by demagogues, "that the authority of all the officers of state is seriously impaired." And Mommsen, writing of the closing period of the Roman Republic, of a time when demagogism so flourished that it "became quite a trade," says: "If the Roman commonwealth has presented all the different functions and organizations more purely and normally than any other in ancient or modern times, it has also exhibited political disorganization—anarchy—with an unenviable clearness."

It is no hasty or superficial conclusion to say that the "progressive" reforms are inaugurating in this country to-day a similar period of political disorganization, at times and in some of its phases

to go to the point of anarchy. There are already the following clearly demonstrated reasons for this conclusion:

(1) Those reforms greatly increase the number of different questions to be submitted to general vote, and by so much increase the opportunities for widespread corruption among the "people," in whose name they are advocated.

(2) They at the same time increase the proportionate time during which the whole community is involved in political agitation and contention, and also the tendency for the contests to become personal and impassioned; with the politically-demoralizing effect that class, partisan or personal allegiance is more regarded than respect for the law.

(3) They subject the whole machinery of government, both as to the laws and the officials who administer them, to frequent and capricious changes which are inimical to efficient government.

(4) Above all they tend to bar really capable men from public office, thus further working against efficient and therefore orderly government.

In this last-mentioned fact we have presented, on a national scale and in a somewhat different form, the same dilemma which has long been encountered on a local scale in the government of cities, namely, that under undemocratic conditions, but with universal suffrage, the men that are most capable of grasping and dealing with the larger affairs of government are, by that fact, unfitted to secure office. By undemocratic conditions, I mean conditions where the majority of the electorate are incapable of independently grasping what have come to be the most important problems and policies of conservative government, and have their action determined by personal, including pecuniary, relations and influences. What those personal relations and influences are by which city bosses attain to and retain their positions is well known; as is also the fact that they are such as the highest type of citizen with statesmanlike abilities cannot enter into or practice.

But just as, at an earlier time, the great problems of municipal government passed beyond the grasp of a majority of city voters so now the great problems of national government have passed beyond the grasp of a majority of the entire national electorate. Hence, with universal suffrage, the votes of the majority instead of being the expression of intelligent and independent opinion, have

come to be merely an expression of preference for the candidate or party that makes the most attractive and plausible promises to effect direct and speedy betterment of the voters' condition; without knowing or considering whether or not those promises can be fulfilled.

This opens the door to political office to the shallow and unscrupulous demagogue, who is unstinting in his flatteries of and promises to the "people," and shuts the door on the capable statesman who only promises such things as can be achieved; and it does so at a time when the government is most in need of the highest statesmanship.

There is no difficulty in understanding how this deleterious, tending to become disastrous, relation between the "people" and the government has originated.

As the country has advanced in its development, economic and political, great and powerful economic organizations and systems have developed, whose operations extend through many states or over the whole country, financial corporations and labor organizations, whose powers are used for the advancement of special or class interests. This has not only made necessary at least a corresponding development and increase and extension of operations, of the national government, as a sovereign regulative and controlling power, but, as regards its other functions, through the up-building and administration of its great departments the government has itself become a greater and more complex corporation than any that has been formed privately for purely business purposes.

Who has done the work of organizing these great corporations, economic and political? And who is operating them to-day? Not the whole people nor the "plain people," but a select class of men of extraordinary natural ability and fitness, supplemented by suitable training, for such work. And when there is talk of "restoring the government to the people," if it means anything more than a false and hollow pretense, it means taking the operation of this vast corporation, the United States government, out of the hands of this select class of men of extraordinary ability of the needed kind, and putting it in the hands of the great mass of voters, a minority of them having at most only ordinary and inadequate ability, and the vast majority practically no ability at all, for such work.

Nobody of any intelligence and judgment would think of oust-

ing the officials and faculty of a great university and placing its affairs in the hands of a body made up without discrimination from men of only common school education and no practical experience as educators. Nor would anyone think of taking the affairs of a great bank or other financial institution out of the hands of the select and trained men of great financial ability who run it, and turning over its management to a number of farmers, or of "working men." The same statement may be made with respect to great manufacturing, transportation, mercantile or other corporations, operating on an inter-state or national scale. The inevitable consequence of such a "revolution" in the management of any such non-political organization would be its complete paralysis and speedy destruction.

The "progressive" movement does not have immediately so great a damaging effect on government only because it does not do what it professes to do, that is, it does not accomplish the physical impossibility of putting the affairs of the still greater governmental corporation directly into the hands of a majority of the general electorate. But the movement, so far as it succeeds, does the next thing to this: it puts the great affairs of government into the hands of men who are pre-eminent as demagogues rather than as statesmen. That generally means either men whose ability to grasp the greater affairs of government only rises a little above the average low standard found in the general electorate, or men who have little or no scruples about employing flattery of the people and misrepresentation of real issues in order to secure votes. In other words, it means putting the affairs of state in the hands of men who lack either the ability or the integrity of purpose to carry on good and orderly government.

Against this result, the advocates of capable, stable and conservative government have, under universal suffrage, no positive, permanent bar or remedy. No doubt failures on the part of mere demagogues to make good their promises will produce temporary reactions when needed constructive work can be accomplished by real statesmen. At such a time it will be the part of far-sighted wisdom and patriotic statesmanship not to rest on the fatuous notion that such a check to the movement marks the end of a mere popular craze; and to make every effort to mitigate the actual, remediable causes of popular discontent.

For one thing, the tariff should be as speedily as possible reduced to a strictly revenue basis. With the country's ports wide open to all the lowest-class laborers of Europe, the policy of using the tariff as an instrument for maintaining a high standard of living and character among wage-earners in this country is a mere politician's pretense; its real effect being to increase the cost of living and therefore tend to reduce or "run out" the more independent, intelligent, but not wealthy, components of the population.

Of still more importance is the need of laws providing for the imposition of direct taxes that will be just and equitable, under the extreme inequality in the distribution of wealth that now exists. Special taxes should be levied in some manner on large accumulations of wealth, individual or corporate, not merely on the ground of ability to pay them, but on the more defensible ground that taxes should be proportional to the amount of protection received from the community and the state.

There are, however, the following weighty reasons for believing that such reasonable reforms cannot permanently arrest this movement tending to the complete breakdown of constitutional government:

(1) As time goes on the disparity between the political capacity of the majority of the electorate and the problems of government to be dealt with will increase rather than decrease.

(2) Regarded solely from the point of view of their several degrees of radicalism, or antagonism to our existing system of constitutional government, there is no clear line of separation between "progressivism" and socialism; and none between socialism and some of the forms or aims of anarchism.

(3) Demagogues, in their strife for the votes of the "people," will constantly be impelled to shift and extend their grounds of attack on efficient and conservative government, so as to win supporters from all orders of malcontents, even including the most extreme, with correspondingly increasing peril to the existing system.

But the end, finally, as heretofore, may be expected to come through an act of the "people," an act, however, of political suicide. The injury to all classes inevitably resulting from civil disorder presses hardest on the "common" and poorer masses of the population. And as a relief from this distress the "people" will at last

become deaf to the blandishments of the misleading demagogue, and, turning to the man who has given proof of the possession of that combination of military ability and statesmanship that are necessary to the putting down of class strife and the re-establishment of orderly government, will, by vote, put him permanently in a position of supreme power.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Doubtless, to many readers, who have long and implicitly held that modern popular enlightenment may be relied upon to insure the perpetuity of modern popular political institutions, it will appear that the conclusions and predictions arrived at in this article are more positive and unqualified than the argument as presented warrants. For a more comprehensive and fundamental treatment of the whole question of the world's prospective political future, the writer must refer such readers to his lately-published book, "From Freedom to Despotism: a Rational Prediction and Forewarning," in which are succinctly given the main results of twenty years' close study of the economic, biological and political causes which determine forms of government and social and political revolutions.